

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
COMMISSION ON NATURAL RESOURCES

2101 Constitution Avenue Washington, D. C. 20418

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES BOARD

August 15, 1974

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford Medical School
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

I am writing to invite you to participate in a study that the National Research Council is undertaking at the request of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. The purpose of the study is to examine and recommend improvements in the processes by which decisions are made regarding the regulation of chemicals posing environmental hazards. More specifically, the study will focus on the assessment of social benefits derived from chemicals, how to balance risks and benefits, and how the regulatory mechanisms available for controlling chemicals affect the risk-benefit equation.

A focus on these problems is considered by EPA as a next step in its efforts to develop a framework for making sound decisions as it carries out mandates to regulate hazardous chemicals and protect the environment. An earlier effort in these regards led to a study in 1973 under the auspices of NRC and directed by Dr. Norton Nelson of the New York University Medical School. That study focused on risk evaluation and was conducted as a one-week working conference in San Antonio, Texas. The report of the study is titled Principles of Evaluating Chemicals in the Environment and will be published late this year.

The present study will be initiated with a two-day symposium on September 19-20, 1974 at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C. The Symposium on Principles of Decision-making for Regulating Chemicals in the Environment is designed to explore the state of the art of decision-making, to reveal gaps in knowledge, and to decide if a more intensive effort such as a working conference can and should be structured to productively address additional issues. I invite you to attend the symposium, with the hopes that your participation in the study will continue if the results of efforts on September 19-20 indicate the study should proceed to a second phase.

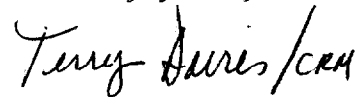
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Several items of information are enclosed with this letter and will provide more background information on the study. Among these is a statement prepared by me to elaborate further on the intention of the study and a tentative agenda for the symposium. If you have questions on any aspects of the study please call me at (202) 462-4400. If you cannot reach me you might wish to call Mr. Ralph C. Wands or Dr. Charles R. Malone of the NRC's Committee on Toxicology and the Environmental Studies Board, respectively. These gentlemen are staff officers for the two NRC units responsible for this study program. Mr. Wands can be reached at (202) 389-6751, and Dr. Malone's phone number is (202) 389-6896. They will be glad to provide you with whatever assistance they can.

I should point out that your travel and lodging expenses for the symposium will be reimbursed by the NRC. Mr. Wands and Dr. Malone will furnish you more information on this and other matters if you can attend the symposium next month.

I sincerely hope that you will join me in this effort, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry Davies / CRM".

Terry Davies
Chairman for the Symposium
for Regulating Chemicals in
the Environment

Enclosures